JCST Trainee Survey

Frequently Asked Questions

1. How often should I complete the survey?

This depends on how many placements you undertake in the training year e.g. trainees in 4-month placements should complete three surveys per year; trainees in 6-month placements should complete two surveys per year.

2. When should I complete the survey?

Please complete the survey towards the end of each placement to ensure that you can comment on your experience as a whole. We recommend that you complete the survey around two weeks before the end of your placement or soon afterwards.

3. How do I access the survey questions?

The survey can be accessed by trainees via ISCP: log into your ISCP account and go to Dashboard/Training History. There is a link to the survey to the right of the details of your current placement.

A list of questions is also provided 'for reference' on the JCST website

See below "How do I access the survey results?"

4. How long does the survey take to complete?

The generic survey should take 10-15 minutes to complete.

There are additional questions for:

- Cardiothoracic Surgery trainees
- General Surgery trainees
- Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery trainees
- Paediatric Surgery trainees
- Trauma and Orthopaedic Surgery trainees
- Urology trainees
- Vascular Surgery trainees
- Less than full time trainees
- Academic trainees (ACFs and ACLs)

These additional questions will take extra time to complete, but this should be no longer than 15 minutes. **Please do not answer any of the additional questions listed above unless you fall into the appropriate category.**

5. Do I have to answer the survey?

We are very grateful to you for taking the time to complete the survey – your feedback is vital in helping us to assess the quality of training.

Please remember that it is a Gold Guide requirement that trainees take part in systems of quality management and quality improvement of their clinical work and training. Therefore, if you are an StR, core trainee, LAT, ACF, ACL, or are on OOPT, we ask you to complete a survey for each placement you undertake during the training year.

If you are an Irish trainee, an SpR, a post-certification fellow, are on OOPE or OOPR or you are not currently in a recognised pre-certification training placement, there is no need for you to complete this survey.

6. Who developed the survey questions?

The survey was developed by the JCST, in conjunction with the Schools of Surgery, to try and limit the number of surveys that surgical trainees are asked to complete. We review the survey on an annual basis and are always pleased to receive feedback and suggestions for improvement.

7. What are my answers used for?

The answers you provide to the survey questions are used to measure the achievement of the JCST quality indicators and to assess the overall quality of the training placement. The aim is to identify good and poor quality training placements so further action can be taken if required.

The annual reports on the JCST website explain how survey data is used alongside data from multiple sources to help us communicate what is happening cross-surgery and in each surgical specialty. There are multiple ways that we view the same data and this includes 'by region' for annual regional reporting.

8. Who can see my answers?

TPDs, Heads of School, SAC Chairs, SAC QA Leads and SAC Liaison Members can access your survey answers. The JCST has also granted access to specific Deanery administrators, who have been nominated by their Head of School, so they can run the survey reports for the purposes of quality management of their local training programmes.

9. Is the survey anonymous?

The Head of School and nominated Deanery administrators in your training region and the SAC Chair and SAC QA Lead for your specialty can access all of the responses you provide. However, your name does not appear on the report and your confidentiality will be protected as far as possible. Your placement unit/hospital, placement specialty and clinical supervisor(s) are used for the purposes of identification.

For posts with fewer than three responses, results are not reported in order to protect trainee anonymity.

10. How do I access the survey results?

The JCST publish an annual trainee survey report on the JCST website.

TPDs, Heads of School, SAC Chairs, SAC QA Leads, SAC Liaison Members and nominated Deanery administrators can run survey reports via ISCP. The reports are only for the purpose of their role shown in ISCP, to support the quality management of local training programmes*.

A report can be run at any time but as the survey aligns to when most trainees start/changeover (normally August or October) it is expected that reports run later in the 'training year' will provide more responses.

Login to your ISCP account and go to 'My trainees'. There is a link to a survey reporting tool under 'Survey Reports' to the right of the screen.

**If you wish to access data for other purposes (e.g. research or publications) you must request the permission of the Data Analysis, Audit and Research Group by contacting jcst@jcst.org.*

11. What is the response rate for JCST trainee survey?

The response rate depends on the number of opportunities to respond i.e. total number of placements (at the time a survey report is run). Each survey is completed at the end of a placement. The total does not necessarily equate to the number of trainees as a trainee may undertake more than one placement, so complete more than one survey. We plan to develop our methodology for reporting a response rate – currently it is estimated as 15-20% (2023-24).

12. What actions can be taken if there is reference to bullying and/or undermining behaviour?

We have included 2 monitoring questions on bullying and harassment in the trainee survey but completing the survey will not provide direct access to support and JCST is not able to raise concerns on behalf of individuals. The JCST website has a policy statement on bullying, undermining and harassment with signposting on where to go for further advice. By signposting to sources of advice, an aim is for trainees to take steps to access support and feel able to raise concerns. This includes speaking with educational supervisors, TPD, Head of School, college tutors, Director of Medical Education or Postgraduate Dean.

We take care with the survey to avoid individuals becoming identifiable, but this can result in misleading results e.g. duplicate recording.

The General Medical Council's National Training Survey includes a section on undermining behaviour. It is an annual census ('snapshot') survey with comments immediately available to the deanery for their response to the GMC. We do not duplicate these questions within the JCST survey.

If you have any queries about the trainee survey, please contact the Quality Team on qa@jcst.org.

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THE SURVEY – YOUR RESPONSES ARE IMPORTANT TO US.